

THOUGHTS
ON THE
EDUCATION
OF A
PRINCE OF WALES.

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LETTER TO A FRIEND.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCXCV.

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LETTER TO A FRIEND.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1830.

THOUGHTS, &c.

DEAR SIR,

AT a moment like the present, when the public mind is occupied by the Marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and every British heart exults in an event, by which the succession is likely to be continued in the direct line of the eldest branch of the
House

House of Hanover, I cannot help turning my thoughts towards the subject on which we have often conversed, the Education of a future Heir Apparent to the Crown of Great Britain. I have been the more strongly induced to this consideration by the prospect of the miseries of France and Holland, and a desire to investigate some of the causes of that unhappy influence, under which all the Monarchies of Europe have been shaken to their foundation. It is no new observation, that Princes and Sovereigns, being men, have brought with them into the world

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the same dispositions as other men ;
 only, unfortunately, that very essential
 part of other men's education, the
 school of the world, is generally more
 calculated in theirs to confirm than to
 eradicate those very habits and ideas
 which it corrects in that of others.
 How this is to be effected, I confess I
 have great doubts, such is the difficul-
 ty to steer between the gross flattery
 of the Courtier on one hand, and
 the unfeeling harshness of him who
 under the mask of freedom and
 philosophy hides the haughty Dicta-
 tor on the other. It is a task which
 demands

demands the nicest discernment, guarded by the greatest caution ; which requires the coolest interference of reason to govern the passions and feelings of the Preceptor, equally with those of the Pupil. The young Prince, if permitted, as his Father has been, to mix early in the society of young English Noblemen of a rank only one step inferior to his own, will meet amongst them with spirits full as high as his own ; he will find some dispositions rather less inclined to shew him extraordinary respect, from the very fear of incurring the suspicion of servility, than to spoil him

him by a contrary behaviour. This he may see carried to great lengths, and these attacks he had better learn to parry, than have occasion to repel. He must learn to rise superior to the frailty of others, and to avoid little trifling disputes and childish differences, because he should be too much above trifles to suffer himself to be ruffled by them. I would particularly wish him to acquire that captivating address, for which he cannot have a better master than his Royal Highness the present Prince of Wales. These kind of manners are the surest to command the

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affection

affection of the world, because they ground the attachment they produce, in the strongest spring of half the actions of the human mind, self-love ; those being the most captivating, as Lord Chesterfield has observed very justly, that leave the man before whom they have been displayed in the best humour with himself. The attentions therefore of a person of so very superior rank raise the inferior for a moment above his situation, reconcile him to the world, and to his own place in it. As to a plan of the different parts of education,

cation, that is not what I wish to enter into, it is the education of the heart, rather than the faculties, it is the formation of the mind, rather than the improvement of the parts, that I wish to consider. He will of course have the best masters the country can afford, or that money will tempt to come from other countries. He should be a perfect master of languages, and these I cannot wish him a greater facility of attaining than exists in his Royal Highness the present Prince:—in short, he should be possessed of every accomplishment

that can adorn the man of fashion, every degree of useful or ornamental knowledge the mind is capable of. He should be instructed in the detail of both naval and military affairs, but by no means embrace either professionally and exclusively. The people of England will always look on a military King with suspicion and distrust; the violent attachment to the standing army will awaken their fears for the liberty of the subject; and the peculiar favour shewn to one profession may excite the jealousy of the other, and prove ultimately a very dangerous

dangerous ground of disunion between them. To this should be added a thorough knowledge of trade and commerce, both foreign and domestic ; and I heartily thank God, that the merits of men raised by fair industry are both known and acknowledged in this country. I am proud to see a brother of an Earl of Oxford, having raised a fortune equal to that of the elder branch of the family, living with hospitality and comfort amongst his friends in the city, encouraging by his example that worthy set of men the British merchants to support the credit of their

their situation, and feel their well-deserved consequence—I am proud to hail him by that glorious name of Father of the City ; a title adequate to his deserts, and worthy the admiration of all sensible men in the kingdom. I see with the greatest pleasure a family as noble as that of the Drummonds in the situation they enjoy, adding lustre by their manner of enjoying it to the means by which it has been acquired. More instances may, and I wish many more might be given ; for I cannot see how men can deserve better of a commercial country than by promoting

promoting its mercantile interests.

What was the end of the haughty behaviour of the Court of France to men of this description?—It denied them the only advantages it had to offer them—it hurt their feelings by insulting an honest pride, and drove them into that system of democracy which they, however erroneously, thought the only means of supporting the consequence they felt they deserved, and which a little more indulgence might have made them happy to receive from a different quarter. I am aware I shall be told of the

luxury

luxury which fortunes rapidly made in trade, especially in India, introduce amongst the lower order of people—but is a whole class of men to be attacked for the folly of a few individuals? Is the foreign money spent in the kingdom by those very individuals no palliative to the evil? To consider the powers of controul the India Company have over their servants, would be too extensive an enquiry to enter into now. I make no doubt many fortunes have been acquired by very unfair means; but there are many men within my own knowledge

knowledge who have made fortunes there, that I can safely say are as incapable of a dishonourable action as any men in the world. In God's name, let them spend the money they have acquired fairly as they please, so long as they are quiet subjects and peaceful members of society.

To return to our subject, there is another species of knowledge which, as his Majesty has set the example of it in a way which does him honour as a man, I will be bold to say our Prince of Wales should not be totally ignorant of—I mean that

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of agriculture. I wish to see the King a large and ample land-holder, not in mere forests and chaces, but a large private property in well improved, well cultivated estates, such as should make it the greatest blessing as well as the highest honour to the British farmer, to be the tenant of his Sovereign. Most Sovereigns have had money in the funds, and some have gambled, I believe, pretty much in them. How far this is liable to exception, I will not presume to determine; but I will take upon me to say, that the same danger cannot exist to the landed as
 may

may to the monied interest, by the private stake the King may have in it. I may be told of the ascendancy he may gain over the representation by this means; but will not money gain an equal influence, nay, will it not gain a more dangerous because a more secret one? The only harm, in my opinion, to be apprehended from the wealth of the Monarch being laid out in landed property, is by giving too much encouragement to speculations; and that extends no farther than the harm occasioned by its becoming, as it is in some measure, the fashion

for other great men to do so. Farming, as well as stock-jobbing, has its gamblers, and, if I may say so, its quacks; but the fanciful prices given by a few speculators among themselves do not fix the market price of cattle or commodities. Every body knows a farmer cannot pay his rent on their terms; and most of these people having themselves broke, have given a lesson which serves as an antidote to their example. As long as the speculations are confined to the rich, where they succeed, the country is benefited; where they do not, the loss falls on those

who

who are best able to bear it. Can there then be the same danger in this line as there may in the other, where, if a King is wicked enough to do such a thing, events can be created or hastened to serve a particular purpose, and the dignity at least of the Monarch lost in the manœuvres of the stock-jobber? After all, the landed and monied interest must be ultimately dependent on each other; and where great ruin to property takes place, as has been the case in France, it is not to be supposed that the one will long survive the other. Wise kings will profit by this

this terrible example many, many years to come ; a wise people will profit by it ; and if we survive the shock, it may eventually become a lesson to posterity equally useful to both sides of the question. It will prevent a Prince from indulging that fatal idea, that where the crown is hereditary the people are in some degree his property. He will not consider the prospect of his accession to the throne, as a minor considers that of his accession to his estate : he will view it as his entrance into an office of high and mighty charge : he will see it in the light of

a weighty

a weighty burthen God has placed on his shoulders at his birth, for the good of a great nation. He will look on the advantages of his situation as so many lights to cheer him on his way, so many refreshments to comfort him in his labour. He will know at the same time, to whom much has been given, much will be required from ; and that from him who has received the ten talents a proportionate interest will be expected.

And now let us consider, but let us do it with all the tenderness possible to the feelings of those whom it will be difficult

difficult to say much on the subject without touching very nearly, the ideas of œconomy to be inculcated into our young Prince. In his minority he will have an income allowed him to live on ; an allowance drawn from the purse of the people ; which if he exceeds, the deficiency must still be made good from that source ; he must still be indebted to their liberality through the medium of Parliament. I can find no other term, no other expression that will carry the meaning with it. Should the Father of a Prince undertake to pay his debts, the burthen

appears

appears in some degree taken from the people, at least its immediate pressure is not so much felt ; but I fear in the long-run, that by whatever means either the private income of the King, or that of the Prince, is dissipated, the consequences to the nation are very likely to be ultimately the same. Other young men exceeding their income, the folly carries its punishment with it : here, if it is done knowingly, deliberately, and depending on the additional supply, I question if folly be a proper name for such a proceeding. I wish to place the greatest stress on the words *knowingly*

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and *deliberately*, because the levity of youth may commit many a culpable action without the least degree of criminality. To constitute any thing like wickedness, the will and foreknowledge must be clearly proved. In this case the temptations are so great, oftentimes arising, as I could give the greatest instances of, if I chose to speak personally, in acts of good-nature and benevolence, that I think pardon should follow the heedless offender ninety-nine times in a hundred. If he has the feelings he ought to have, they will inflict so severe a punishment as
will

will prevent the possibility of relapse ; they will suggest such reflections as will stop the evil in the earliest stage, by embittering every enjoyment the expenditure of a guinea beyond his income could possibly procure.

His income I would have splendid, and fit in all respects for his situation ; his pleasures too should be nobly and amply provided for. If, for example, the chase makes one of them, I would have that establishment on the most liberal footing, and managed so that he shall have it in its greatest perfection. If he is fond of horses, I

cannot see any harm in his having a few in training: our Kings formerly went to Newmarket, and there was an establishment there for them. I would have him run merely for the stake, at least not back his horses very deep, because I suppose he follows the amusement for its own sake, and for the liking he has to the animal, not for the sake of the gaming. He should, however, pursue those sports only if he really likes them; if not, there cannot be the least necessity for his forcing or pretending a taste for them, as, in that case, it is a
large

large expence only incurred to make him appear ridiculous. Play I say nothing about, because I think, for a million of reasons, he had better let it alone. Women he probably must and will have; I will therefore let alone all the trite common advice about them and their influence, and bring all I have to say to one point. As from his situation he will have greater probability of success with many than other men, his personal vanity has oftentimes less cause to be flattered than that of others. Whatever women therefore he has, I hope he will have the sense

sense to see the necessity of unaffected impenetrable secrecy on the subject, because the contrary is ten times more inexcusable in him than any other man. His table, his household, his living in short, should be a pattern of the most magnificent hospitality, worthy of a great Prince, and worthy of a great Nation. All beyond is riot and profusion, and draws with it its never-failing companion, disgrace.

And now, Sir, I will appeal to the candour of any man to say, whether or not I have consulted the happiness of the private life of the Prince of
Wales,

Wales, as well as his greatness and prosperity ; whether I have left out a single instance in which I could provide *ut gratia, fama, valetudo contingat abundè*, altering the text from the *mundus* to the *clarus victus, non deficiente crumena* ; whether I have not laid the foundation of his happiness on the strongest basis, that of the people he is to govern ; and whether I have not placed the ground-work of his throne in the richest and noblest soil, the affection of the nation. I have treated the subject, I hope, with all the respect due to the Prince of Wales—I have treated it
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with the freedom, but at the same time
with the loyalty, of a British subject.
Attached by early education, I had
almost said by birth, to the Whig prin-
ciples, I look to the Constitution as
fixed by our forefathers at the Revo-
lution as the strong hold by which
we may defy our enemies, and trans-
mit to our latest posterity that great-
est blessing, a Government uniting
executive strength with the liberty and
safety of the individual.

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W. H. W.

1817

